

**Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee
February 1, 2005**

Present

Harriet Barrow

Steve Berlucchi

Sarah Bradbury

Derek Cimeno

Bob Ford

Angela Grant

Dan Greenbaum

Dave Grunden

Tristan Israel

Melinda Loberg

Mark London

Srinivas Sattoor

Russell Smith

Jo-Ann Taylor

Jay Wilbur

Bill Wilcox

Existing Bridge

- Mark to call District 5 to clarify status of repairs

Temporary Bridge – Comments on the 75% Design

- MassHighway should clarify the eelgrass under bridge
- Mark will contact Steve McLaughlin to ensure that the plan is tested by MEP

Permanent Bridge

- Mark, Steve and Angela will fill out the form for the federal earmark
- Mark will ask Steve McLaughlin to ensure that the RFQ will allow a change of bridge height.
- The Committee should start working on the planning of the permanent bridge
- We need to clarify the height (3-4 feet could make a big difference, check re Macial Marine and shipyard) and the width (e.g. presence of a bikepath)
- We should hold a public meeting in the Spring to get input

Report from Lobbying Subcommittee

- Subcommittee report on meeting with Tom Cahir and others January 20, 2005 (see addendum)

Addendum
Report from Lobbying Subcommittee

DRAFT MEMO

TO: Lagoon Pond Bridge Committee

FROM: Lobbying Subcommittee

RE: Report of meeting – January 20, 2005

Attending: Tom Cahir, Deputy Commissioner of Transportation
Steve McLaughlin, MaHighway Department
Susan Rohrbach, aide to Senator O’Leary
Tristan Israel, Tisbury Board of Selectmen
Russell Smith, Legislative Liason for Senator O’Leary and Rep.

Turkington

Melinda Loberg, Pres. TWI, Tisbury Harbor Management Committee
Harriet Barrow, V. Pres. TWI
Angela Grant, Director, Martha’s Vineyard Transit Authority

This meeting, held at the request of the Martha’s Vineyard group representing the Lagoon Pond Drawbridge Committee, took place in the offices of Tom Cahir to discuss issues related to the bridge project. The sub-committee raised issues related to funding, design and permitting of both the temporary and permanent bridges.

- Funding: The Martha’s Vineyard community continues to be concerned that once the temporary bridge has been built, the construction of the permanent bridge will no longer be a high priority for Mass Highway Department (MHD). MHD has no mechanism to provide assurance now that, once the design and permitting are complete, the funding will be available. The committee requested an updated time-line of construction for both the temporary and permanent bridges so that an appropriate and timely earmark of funding can be pursued at the Federal level. MHD stated that the most optimistic start date for the temporary bridge would be in February, 2006 with a completion date in August/September 2007

It was noted that the price for the temporary bridge has grown from \$4.3 million to \$5.2 million during the last six months with the probability that increasing steel prices will have an additional impact on the final price. The committee again raised the question: at what point, if any, would the state find that the costs associated with building a temporary bridge become more onerous than maintaining the current bridge for the length of time it would take to design, permit and build a new permanent bridge? Steve McLaughlin stated that they were committed to building the temporary bridge because it was the most cost-effective and reliable solution. The MHD asserts that the temporary bridge, while within two feet of the house in question, will not prevent the owner's use during construction. A temporary driveway and a barrier will be built to provide access and protection.

- Permitting: Because the project is funded under the Bond Bill and because the permanent bridge alignment is the same as that of the existing bridge, Steve McLaughlin stated that both the temporary and permanent bridge construction projects are exempt from permitting by MEPA, Chapter 91 Waterways license and the Wetland Act as well as any local Conservation Commissions. Accordingly he outlined the permitting MHD is currently pursuing.
 1. The Coast Guard – already filed. Also, the Coast Guard is working on permitting both bridges simultaneously as long as there are no changes to the existing channel.
 2. NEPA – MHD has filed for a categorical exclusion (CE) from NEPA permitting requirements. All other permits must be approved in order to win a CE from NEPA.
 3. National Historic Preservation Act – must return a “no effect” finding in order to proceed.
 4. Army Corps of Engineers – ready for a February filing.
 5. Water quality from DEP – not yet filed.
 6. Coastal Zone Management – Consistency review (to be filed).

The bridge committee requested two things of the permitting process:

1. The amount of fill expected during the building of the temporary bridge be calculated and run through the model developed by the Mass Estuaries Project to better understand its influence on the tidal flow as well as its impact on shellfish beds and wetlands in the area.
2. A communication system and point person be dedicated to coordinating the permitting process to facilitate the smoothest and

most delay-free permitting of the two bridges, taking into account the concerns of local agencies whose conservation concerns may be addressed by the aforementioned authorized permitting agencies.

- Design: MHD requested assurance that the proposed alignment for the temporary bridge is acceptable to the committee prior to filing the RFR for the design of the permanent bridge. This assurance was given, with the explanation that a comprehensive written report responding to the MHD's 75% design submission would be forthcoming from the MV Commission. Steve McLaughlin stated that the RFR is ready to file and that he has a design firm in mind. The committee requested that an architect be involved to address issues of esthetics and safety so vital to this community.
- Communication: The committee strongly requested more openness and straightforwardness on the part of MHD. They have not shared with this committee information about the present condition of the bridge, its recent closure or their projected repair plans and time-line.
- Next steps: The committee still plans to seek a meeting with Doug Foy, Grabauskis, Mark Forrest (Delahunt), and someone from the Governor's office. Additionally, we recommend that the larger committee turn its attention to the design of the permanent bridge so that public feedback can be given to MHD as it seeks to hire a design firm.